

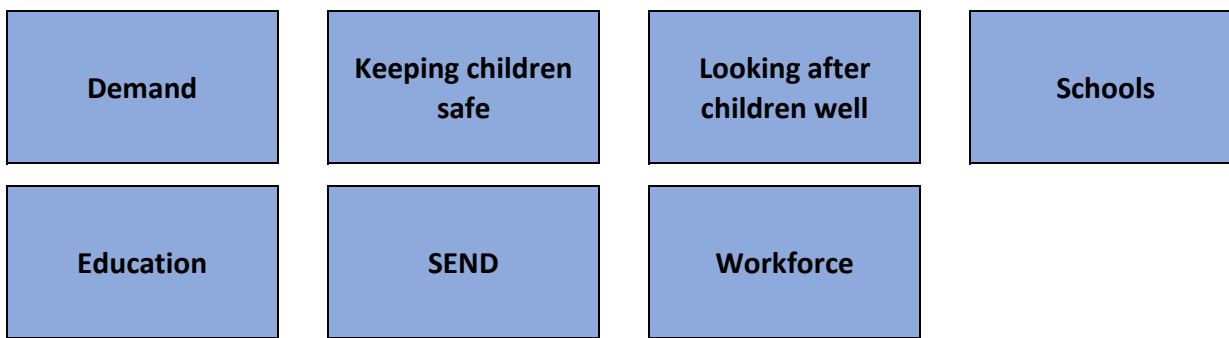


CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE








Wednesday 22nd January 2024

REPORT TITLE:	CHILDREN'S SERVICES PERFORMANCE REPORT
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION

Children, Young People & Education Committee - indicator sets



Demand

	Year-end			2024/25		National (23/24)	North West (23/24)	Stat Neighbours (23/24)	Trend
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Q1	Q2				
Social care contacts	10732	12252	24103	6940	6259	-	-	-	
Early Help contacts	11128	9148	11114	3634	3245	-	-	-	
Referrals to social care	3244	3355	4152	1094	911	-	-	-	
% of domestic abuse referrals to children's social care	27.4%	20.4%	23.6%	22.6%	25.0%	-	-	-	
Child In Need rate per 10,000 population	392.2	399.8	424.0	438.6	417.6	333.0	380.0	438.0	
Child Protection rate per 10,000 population	58.6	57.1	56.6	55.4	58.6	42.0	49.0	51.0	
Children Looked After rate per 10,000 population	121.0	118.0	116.0	116.1	113.5	70.0	94.0	112.0	

Supporting narrative
Contacts

During Q2 contact numbers have significantly declined as would be expected during the school's summer break. However, only 14% of all contacts received were progressed to referral. The remaining contact outcomes:

- Information and advice 56%
- Early Help support 13%
- Information requests (EHCP/CafCass etc) 27%

A third of all contacts received during this period were generated by Merseyside Police with 20.2% of contacts relating to domestic abuse.

The highest number of contacts from individual wards were generated from Bidston St James, and Rock Ferry. Secondary to domestic abuse, the following categories received a higher level of contact:

- Managing behaviour
- Neglect
- Adult Crime

Referrals

The number of referrals has decreased significantly from the end of Q1 and the rate of referrals per 10,000 (606.5) is below stat neighbours (644) but above North West (529.6) and the national (544.5).

Child in Need (CIN)

Our child in need rate per 10,000 has decreased from the end of Q1 but we have seen a slight increase in the number of children requiring a safeguarding plan. Whilst this figure may represent a reduction in the number of referrals this may also be linked to the increase in child protection cases. See below.

Child Protection (CP)

Child Protection numbers have increased to 411. This is the highest since February 2022. The teams are working towards supporting children to remain with families and managing risk at child protection. Whilst there has been a reduction of new CLA in Q2, there has been an increase in CP. There is further work to be undertaken to ensure that appropriate packages of support are in place to then enable children to step down safely from CP.

Children Looked After (CLA)

The number of CLA has decreased further this quarter from 765 to 730, after being above 800 in December 2022 and January 2023. This is the lowest number of CLA since 2016. We are seeing less children coming into care and the introduction of the Care Programme Board ensures we have effective management oversight.

Keeping children safe

	Year-end			2024/25		National (23/24)	North West (23/24)	Stat Neighbours (23/24)	Trend
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Q1	Q2				
% of Early Help cases closed with outcomes met	83.5%	88.7%	85.3%	77.6%	91.3%	-	-	-	
% Repeat referrals within 12 months period	21.5%	23.3%	23.2%	22.6%	25.0%	22.0%	21.0%	22.0%	
% Assessments completed within timescale	81.1%	75.5%	72.7%	76.0%	76.0%	84.0%	82.0%	82.0%	
Children who were subject to a section 47 enquiry Rate per 10,000 YTD	207.3	214.9	208.0	56.5	116.7	187.0	204.0	244.0	
% of children who were subject to a section 47 enquiry that led to an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC)	38.0%	31.1%	30.0%	33.6%	28.7%	32.0%	33.0%	35.0%	
% Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) taking place in the month and within timescales	75.6%	59.5%	68.4%	75.2%	70.3%	80.0%	82.0%	82.0%	
Child Protection Plans ceased Rate per 10,000 YTD	64.0	63.2	56.5	15.3	30.1	52.0	57.0	77.0	
% of children on second or subsequent Child Protection Plan	23.0%	31.4%	21.9%	20.8%	17.9%	25.0%	25.0%	24.0%	
% of visits completed within statutory timescale - Child in Need (CIN)	82.8%	78.9%	70.2%	75.5%	68.8%	-	-	-	
% of visits completed within statutory timescale - Child Protection (CP)	81.4%	74.7%	85.5%	86.3%	88.6%	-	-	-	
% of visits completed within statutory timescale - Children Looked After (CLA)	90.5%	90.8%	91.4%	91.8%	91.7%	-	-	-	
Reduce first time entrants into the criminal justice system (rate per 100,000)	114	86	141	31	63	-	-	-	
Reduce young people re-offending (%)	41.9	41	75	18.20%	33.30%	-	-	-	
Reduce the use of Custody (rate per 1,000)	0.16	0.16	0.13	0.00	0.00	-	-	-	
Children currently open to MACE (Multi-Agency Child Exploitation)	-	-	56	64	61	-	-	-	
Children removed from MACE due to lowered risk	-	-	12	4	7	-	-	-	

Supporting narrative
Repeat Referrals

Our repeat referral rate for Quarter 2 was 25% (228) of which 40% were re-referred for the same reason. Primary reason for referral for the same reason is domestic abuse.

Assessments

The percentage of assessments completed in timescales has remained stable at 76% this quarter. RAG rated RED and low compared to statistical neighbours (target range of 81.7% - 86.8%). There has been a number of staff changes including movement and promotion of staff across children's services. This has impacted on stability and consistency for teams and our overall performance relating to the timeliness of assessments.

Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC)

The percentage ICPCs completed within timescale during Quarter 2 was 70.3% and is RAG rated red. Whilst this has been disappointing, the Safeguarding unit track all of these children and have been working with the service to improve this performance. Some of these reasons have been a delay in the reports being ready, the service has worked to streamline the processes to make them more efficient.

% of children on second or subsequent Child Protection Plan

There has been a reduction in the percentage of children on a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time. At the end of Quarter 2 performance stood at 17.9% which is a reduction of 2.9% when compared to Quarter 1. Wirral is also 7.1% below the National average. The number of children ceasing on a Child Protection plan this quarter was 97.

Looking after children well

	Year-end			2024/25		National (23/24)	North West (23/24)	Stat Neighbours (23/4)	Trend
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Q1	Q2				
% CLA visits completed within timescale	90.5%	90.8%	91.4%	91.8%	91.7%	-	-	-	
% Completed health assessment reviews YTD	91.0%	78.0%	86.7%	49.3%	45.9%	89.0%	92.0%	93.0%	
% Completed dental checks YTD	86.0%	79.0%	78.2%	10.2%	37.1%	79.0%	83.0%	84.0%	
% Completed Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) YTD	96.0%	97.3%	91.5%	55.9%	56.3%	77.0%	85.0%	83.0%	
% of CLA adopted in year	8.0%	11.0%	8.8%	12.5%	8.2%	9.0%	10.0%	9.0%	
% of CLA placed with Foster carers	71.0%	69.0%	70.0%	70.1%	69.4%	67.0%	66.0%	66.0%	
Timeliness of Adoption process A10 (426 days national target) Average days	809	652	565	852	651	not published	not published	not published	
% Care leavers in suitable accommodation (Age 19-21)	94.0%	94.0%	96.5%	96.0%	95.0%	88.0%	91.0%	90.0%	
% Care leavers in Education , Employment or Training (EET) (Age 19-21)	54.0%	59.0%	56.5%	58.1%	59.0%	54.0%	53.0%	52.0%	
Missing Episodes	1385	1281	1345	384	340	-	-	-	
CAMHS referrals seen within 18 weeks	96.4%	N/A	90.0%	99.0%	97.0%	-	-	-	

Supporting narrative










There has been a slight dip in timeliness of CLA visits due to staffing issues, this is being addressed.







Health assessments have dropped slightly as there are some delays with out of borough reviews being completed, work to improve this is being undertaken with colleagues from Health.





The numbers of children adopted has been low due to the timing of court proceedings taking longer than normal, 10 children have been adopted at the end of Q2 with numbers expected to increase in Q3.

Timeliness of Adoption processes continues to improve ensuring that children are living with their adoptive families permanently at the earliest opportunity.

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)

	Year-end			2024/25		Current National	Current North West	Current Stat neighbours	Trend
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Q1	Q2				
% Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP) issued within 20 week timescale (Excluding Exceptions)	24%	36.60%	33.54%	16.80%	16.20%	50.30%	56.70%	60.59%	
% of requests that went to tribunal	9.65%	5.67%	10.90%	6.36%	6.87%	-	-	-	
% of Children Looked After with (EHCP) Education and Health Care Plan	9.26%	19.90%	22.90%	23.20%	23.60%	30.80%	28.80%	29.19%	
% of Children In Need with (EHCP) Education and Health Care Plan	16.45%	20.80%	19.0%	18.7%	20.1%	-	-	-	
% of Child Protection with (EHCP) Education and Health Care Plan	6.45%	8.80%	10.70%	11.50%	13.00%	-	-	-	
% of Early Help Episodes with (SEND) Special Educational needs and disabilities	26.44%	30.40%	31.60%	31.90%	34.90%	-	-	-	
% of Children Looked After with (SEN) Special Educational Need support	19.29%	16.10%	17.10%	17.20%	18.80%	27.30%	27.10%	26.69%	
% of Children In Need with (SEN) Special Educational Need support	16.20%	14.30%	12.90%	14.10%	13.40%	-	-	-	
% of Child Protection with (SEN) Special Educational Need support	21.51%	21.20%	20.90%	19.20%	21.80%	-	-	-	

	Year-end				2024/25 Summer Term	Current National	Trend
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24			
(EHCP) Education and Health Care Plan- Overall School Attendance %	90.60%	88.90%	87.30%	86.90%	85.20%	86.70%	
(EHCP) Education and Health Care Plan Overall Persistent absence %	25.60%	37.10%	27.20%	26.00%	35.60%	37.60%	
Number of pupils with (EHCP) Education and Health Care Plan who are electively home educated	18	12	20	14	16	-	
(SEN) Special Educational Need support - Overall School Attendance %	93.40%	91%	89%	88.0%	90.3%	89.10%	
(SEN) Special Educational Need support - Overall Persistent absence %	19.30%	28.60%	23.80%	26.30%	31.89%	29.80%	
Number of pupils with (SEN) Special Educational Need support who are electively home educated	39	54	59	71	92	-	

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Current National	Current North West	Current Stat neighbours	Trend
Key Stage 2 (RWM) Reading, Writing, Maths EHCP - % at Expected Level	2.50%	5%	10%	8%	8%	8.30%	
Key Stage 4 Overall Progress 8 Score - (EHCP) Education and Health Care Plan	-1.33	-1.02	Available next quarter	-1.12	-1.28	-1.27	
Key Stage 2 Reading, Writing, Maths (SEN) Special Educational Need support - % at Expected Level	20.70%	25%	25%	24%	23%	24.50%	
Key Stage 4 Overall Progress 8 Score - (SEN) Special Educational Need support	-0.46	-0.44	Available next quarter	-0.45	-0.59	-0.59	

Supporting narrative

The percentage of Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks, at the end of Quarter 2 was 16.20%. This is still somewhat off the national average of 50.30%. Requests for assessment has increased and demand is outweighing capacity within the SEND Referral and Assessment Team. Performance has also been impacted by recent industrial action.


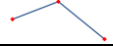
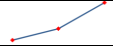
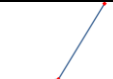
A full restructure of the SEND Referral and Assessment Team has been a priority for the Directorate and will bring much needed additional capacity to the service. The new structure went live on 11th November 2024. 32 new team members have been recruited - some were able to start immediately, others will join the team in the New Year.






Another improvement for the service includes the introduction of a new case management system in August 2024. All EHCPs are now recorded in LiquidLogic alongside our Social Care and Early Help records. LiquidLogic is much more user friendly than the old Capita ONE system. Existing members of the SEND Team have received extensive training on the new system. All new members of staff joining the SEND Team will also receive full training on LiquidLogic.

Key stage 2 results have now been published. Children with an EHCP, achieving the expected standard in Reading, Writing & Maths in Wirral was 10%. This is 5% higher than the previous year and 2% higher than the National and North West average.

Likewise, children with SEN Support in Wirral, achieving the expected standard in Reading, Writing & Maths was 25% - higher than the current national and North West averages.

Schools

	Year-end			2024/25		Current National	Trend
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Q1	Q2		
% Exclusions - suspensions	1.67	3.83	6.30%	1.54%	0.90%	4.13%	
% Exclusions - permanent	0.070	0.13	0.09%	0.01%	0.01%	0.05%	
Number of children known to be electively home educated	262	306	408	391	445	-	
Number of Pupils who are not in receipt of full-time education and subject of an agreed part time timetable (Indicator once named - Pupils who are missing more than 25hrs of education a week (CME25)	79	106	432	416	29	-	

	Year-end			2024/25	Current National	Trend
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25 Summer Term		
% of school age pupils eligible for (FSM) Free school meal	27.59%	28.90%	29.91%	30.79%	24.60%	
Overall School Attendance %	91.20%	91.70%	91.50%	91.30%	94.00%	
Overall Unauthorised Absence %	2.10%	2.50%	2.80%	3.40%	2.30%	
Overall Persistent Absence %	27.30%	24.80%	24.60%	31.70%	20.70%	
Overall School Attendance Open to Social Care %	86.4	84.90%	82.10%	82.10%	-	

Supporting narrative

The number of part time timetables is low in this quarter due to it being the start of the academic year. We have issued updated guidance to schools including making them aware that we will automatically end a part time timetable at the end of a half term unless there is an end date provided or further review documentation provided.

The number of children who are Electively Home Educated continues to rise as it does across the country. In September alone we saw 62 young people added to our EHE cohort although 28 did leave the cohort to return to schools.

Suspensions and permanent exclusions are below the national average. This is partly due to the greater use of interventions by schools, alongside support, strategies and advice from the Local Authority. There has been a greater increase in the use of managed moves facilitated by the Inclusion Team to reduce the amount of Permanent Exclusions.

30.79% of Wirral children eligible for Free School Meals compared to a national average of 24.6%.

Overall school attendance in Wirral is 91.30% compared to a national average of 94%. Unauthorised and persistent absence in Wirral are slightly above the national figures.

Education

	Year-end			2024/25		Trend
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Q1	Q2	
% of under 5's who are engaged with the Early Years Service	51.11%	43.64%	45%	46%	46%	
% of under 5's who have sustained engagement the Early Years Service (3 of more)	60.50%	47.94%	47%	47%	49%	
% of 2 year olds benefitting from funded early education	83%	77.89%	94%	97%	97%	
% of 3 year olds benefitting from funded early education	91%	90.96%	85%	82%	86%	

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Current National	Trend
% of schools rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted	83%	81.60%	83.20%	84%	89.7%	
% of early years settings good or better	98%	97%	97.80%	98.40%	98%	
% of young people aged 16 and 17 who are Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) or Not Known	5.00%	4.60%	4.50%	4.60%	5.20%	

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Current NCER National	Trend
Foundation Stage - % achieving a good level of development	62.9%	65.2%	66.2%	67.7%	
Foundation Stage - % of children who are looked after achieving a good level of development	48.10%	42.9%	28.60%	41%	
The gap in progress between disadvantaged pupils and their peers achieving good level of development in early years foundation stage profile	20.2	19.5	16.3	18.4	
% Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving a Good Level of Development in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile	21.5%	20.2%	19.10%	21%	
% achieving expected standard in reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2	52%	55.6%	53.70%	61%	
% Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving the 'expected standard' in English, reading, English writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2	24.1%	27.2%	24.60%	22%	
The gap in progress between disadvantaged pupils and their peers at Key Stage 4	0.92	0.44	Available next quarter	0.6	
Progress 8 Score for Wirral	-0.03	-0.11	Available next quarter	-0.02	

Supporting narrative

Good Level of Development The figure has increased by 1.0% compared to the previous year and the gap to national has narrowed to 1.5%, the school improvement has offered significant support to support early years practitioners over the last year and we will monitor the impact as the 2024 results are published. The gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged has also reduced in the last academic year by 3.2% but Wirral is still higher the national average by 2.1%

Key Stage 2 outcomes The number of children achieving the expected standard at Key Stage 2 has decreased by 1.9% and the gap to national has increased to 7.3%, this gap has increased again this year back to a similar figure in the previous year. From a Wirral perspective, Maths continues to be the area of challenge for Wirral at Key Stage 2 and this standard has reduced this year. To address this area the Local Authority are again supporting schools where Key Stage 2 outcomes are below the national average. We are also working with MAT's regarding academy schools with outcomes below the national average.

Workforce

	Year-end			2024/25		National	North West	Statistical Neighbours	Trend
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Q1	Q2				
Vacancy rate – number of posts currently vacant / total no of posts Social Workers	30%	26%	23%	24%	25%	-	-	-	
Agency rate – positions filled by agency staff Social Workers	22%	21%	22%	23%	22%	-	-	-	
New starters - Social Workers	20	33	4	6	3	-	-	-	
Retention of staff – number of leavers - Social Workers	33	36	4	5	7	-	-	-	
Average FTE days lost to sickness absence - Social Workers	16.46	14.82	13.6	4.9	3.78		-	-	
Average caseload for social worker	15.5	14.96	15.32	15.2	14	16.3	17.9	17	
Vacancy rate – number of posts currently vacant / total no of posts Children's Services Directorate	20%	15%	17%	20%	22%	-	-	-	
Agency rate – positions filled by agency staff Children's Services Directorate	6.29%	6.10%	6.10%	5.60%	5.40%	-	-	-	
New starters - Children's Services Directorate	98	93	31	22	47	-	-	-	
Retention of staff – number of leavers - Children's Services Directorate	102	86	21	25	35	-	-	-	
Average FTE days lost to sickness absence Children's Services Directorate	12.55	12.06	3.4	4.1	2.9	-	-	-	

Supporting narrative

The data for Children's Social Care in Quarter 2 shows that the vacancy rate has risen, however at the same time what this data doesn't capture is the empty posts (a post without any worker in at all) which is going down over time. For example, if we just looked at Social Workers and excluded Advanced Practitioners and Social Worker Team Managers from the calculation, the vacancy rate would read Q1 31% and Q2 27%.

Average Social Worker Caseload is the lowest its been for many years and currently stands at 14.

Acronym	Description
CIN	Child in need
CP	Child protection
CPP	Child protection plan
CLA	Child looked after
DA	Domestic Abuse
ICPC	Initial Child Protection Conference
MACE	Multi-Agency Child Exploitation
SDQ	Strength & Difficulties Questionnaire
EET	Education, Employment & Training
NEET	Not in Education, Employment & Training
CAMHs	Child & adolescent mental health service
SEND	Special Educational Needs & Disabilities
EHCP	Education Health Care Plan
GLD	Good Level of Development
FSM	Free School Meals
EHE	Electively Home Educated
DfE	Department for Education
CYP	Children & Young People
PA	Persistent Absence
FTE	Full Time Equivalent